



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut General Assembly Veterans' Affairs Committee Testimony of Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell February 27, 2018

Senator Flexer, Senator Martin, Representative Hennessy, Representative Ferraro and members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I am sorry that I am unable to testify before you in person today, and want to thank you for allowing me to provide you with written testimony regarding **Senate Bill 232, An Act Concerning Spouses Of Transferred Members Of The Armed Forces**.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) strongly supports moving toward true reciprocity for teachers from other states, territories and countries who are seeking to come to Connecticut, and have made several advancements toward achieving that goal in the last three years.

Under our current Interstate Agreement, if a military spouse has completed a state approved teacher preparation program or an Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) program and is trying to become certified in Connecticut, they would be eligible for certification without a transcript evaluation and would not be required to complete a course in special education. Therefore, those who meet this criteria are already eligible for certification without this legislation.

This proposal seeks to require the CSDE to issue a certificate to a candidate who has not completed a teacher preparation program, but has had two successful years of teaching, and would not require them to complete a course of study in special education. We fully support helping the spouses of veterans become teachers in our state, but we strongly believe that if they have not completed a state approved teacher preparation program or an ARC program, they must complete a study in special education before becoming fully certified.

With that said, the Department has actually proposed legislation this session that is part of our agency bill, SB 183, that would allow us to issue a temporary nonrenewal certificate that is valid for three years to a teacher coming into Connecticut from another state. This would allow ample time for the spouse of a veteran to complete the required special education coursework, while still actively teaching in the classroom.

We hope you will take this information into consideration before voting on this proposal. I would be very happy to meet with you if you have any questions or if we can be helpful drafting new language, and I am looking forward to working with you on this important issue moving forward.

